

## Houston Chapter **Newsletter**

**November 10 Meeting**  
***How the Findings of the Governor's  
Commission on Disaster  
Recovery and Renewal May  
Affect You and Your Business***  
**Robert A. Eckels**  
**The Eckels Law Firm, P.C.**



The 2009 Hurricane Season ends this month. While Houston has so far been spared any major hurricanes this year, Galveston, Southeast Harris County and the upper Texas coast are still recovering from Hurricane Ike. Former Harris County Judge Robert Eckels chaired The Governor's Commission on Disaster Recovery and Renewal and will provide a summary of and an update on the findings of the commission, the outlook for recovery and how the communities of Texas are coming together to better protect homeowners and businesses from future storms. The Commission very recently submitted its comprehensive findings to the Governor. Find out how the commission's recommendations may impact your business in the event of future hurricane disasters which could impact our area. Robert will also be glad to address any questions anyone has about events during his many terms as County Judge.

Judge Robert Eckels' law practice is built on a decades-long career in public service and leadership of the nation's third largest county. As County Judge of Harris County, he led the development of the Harris County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency

**See "Robert Eckels" page 2**

**Professional Development Session:**  
***The New Untouchables: Inventing  
Ways to Thrive in the Recession***  
**Nick Bednorz, CEO and Managing  
Director, AXIA Resources**

How will you use the recession? Do you look at it as an opportunity to distance yourself from your competitors? In this environment, can you clearly demonstrate that the Finance organization can be a value-add to your organization? The majority of businesses are cutting costs across the board. They have a "hunker-down" approach to surviving the recession. They're missing a golden opportunity. The new untouchables are the innovators who can use a new perspective to rise above the masses. If analyzed appropriately, strategic moves can be made right-now to set yourself, your organization and your company apart from the competition.



Nick Bednorz will feature a discussion that contemplates risk assessment in a manner that enables the Finance organization to deliver sustainable returns in the current economic environment. He will step through strategies for evaluating risks specific to the Finance department, the related residual impact of those risks and solutions to align with your business values. You will be provided with the tools to invent smarter ways for cost-cutting and providing new services which will enable you to prosper and prevail.

**See "Nick Bednorz" page 3**

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**November 10  
Meeting & P.D.**

Houston Country Club  
1 Potomac Drive

P.D. Session (4:30pm):

**Nick Bednorz**  
**AXIA Resources**

*The New Untouchables:  
Inventing Ways to thrive in  
the Recession*

Social Hour:(5:30 pm)

Dinner (6:30 pm):

**Robert A. Eckels**

*How the Findings of the  
Governor's Commission on  
Disaster Recovery and Re-  
newal May Affect You and  
Your Business*

**November  
Meeting Sponsors**

**AXIA**  
RESOURCES  
**BKD**  
CPAs & Advisors

## A Letter from the President...



November 10th will be our final meeting for calendar 2009 and will again be at the Houston Country Club. I look forward to another exceptional dinner speaker as former Harris County Judge Robert Eckels addresses us about the Governor's Commission on Disaster Recovery and Renewal that Judge Eckels chaired.

Our professional development session, which begins at 4:30, will be presented by **AXIA Resources**. Nick Bednorz, CEO and Managing Director of AXIA, will present to us *Inventing Ways to Thrive in the Recession*. AXIA Resources is a new sponsor to FEI Houston and I hope you will join me in thanking Nick and in seeking out the other AXIA representatives who will also be in attendance and let them know how much we all appreciate their sponsorship.

**BKD LLP** will be our gold social hour sponsor for November and BKD is also a new sponsor to the Houston chapter. Please also search out the BKD representatives and thank them for joining our great group of Houston FEI sponsors.

We have two free breakfast seminars that our members are invited to attend in November. On November 13, 2009, Robert Half and Protivi are hosting a seminar on IFRS that will be held at the Intercontinental Hotel in the Galleria from 7:30 to 9:30 AM. On November 19, 2009, the Houston chapter is co-sponsoring a breakfast seminar with Bowne of Houston and Protiviti at the Bowne offices near downtown. The seminar is titled *Going Public – Will You be ready when the Market is?* This breakfast seminar is also from 7:30 to 9:30 AM. You should all have received blast e-mails with instructions on how to register. Please e-mail me at [todell@hornsolutions.net](mailto:todell@hornsolutions.net) if you need any assistance in registering for either of these seminars.

There are two general housekeeping items that I need to address with you regarding our meetings at the Houston Country Club. First, please follow the Houston Country Club policy that all men attending events in the main clubhouse area are required to wear a coat and tie after 5 PM. We have been getting more lax regarding this policy lately, but the policy is in effect and we at FEI are expected to follow this policy. Second, let me again call to your attention our reservation policy for our monthly meetings. You should be registering for Tuesday meetings by 3:00 PM on the Friday preceding the Tuesday meeting. This is to allow us to give an accurate count for dinner to make sure we have enough seats. We have had to turn away several members and guests who wanted to attend dinner in September and October as they did not register by the 3 PM Friday deadline. Thanks in advance for your close attention to these two items.

I hope each of you has a joyous holiday season as we prepare for the end of the decade. We have much to be thankful for and I encourage you to do what you can to brighten the season for those less fortunate than us. See you on the 10th!

Tony O'Dell, President 2009-2010  
[todell@hornsolutions.net](mailto:todell@hornsolutions.net)

### Robert Eckels

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Management, and the Houston Transtar Transportation and Emergency Operations Center. Today, the State of Texas, Harris County, the City of Houston, the Harris County Metropolitan Transit Authority and partners from the Federal Government, private sector and NGO's work together to protect critical public assets such as water and power systems, and national strategic assets such as the Houston Ship Channel and the related petrochemical industries.

Judge Eckels received international recognition when Harris County responded to Hurricane Katrina and the massive destruction and loss of life in New Orleans and the US Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Alabama. The Harris County Astrodome and Reliant Park became the largest shelter operation in US history as over 250,000 residents of storm ravaged areas fled to the Houston region. Three weeks after Katrina, Judge Eckels coordinated, through the Houston Transtar Center, the evacuation of 2.5 million residents in the face of Hurricane Rita.

**See "Robert Eckels" page 3**

## FEI Houston Officers & Committee Chairs

### **President**

**Tony O'Dell, CPA**  
Horn Solutions, Inc

### **President-Elect**

**Terry E. Sanford**  
Carriage Services, Inc.

### **V.P. – Programs**

**Dominic Fillippa**  
Seal Tech, Inc.

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SBM Atlantia

**Rebecca McCulloch**  
HSBC

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**Charles "Chuck" Fischer**  
Hewlett-Packard Company

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Shell

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**Mark Vise**  
Intertek

### **V.P. Prof. Development**

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Ameron International Corp.

**Brett Clapsaddle**  
InterMarine Incorporated

### **Secretary**

**Dawn Smajstrla**  
Anadarko

### **Treasurer**

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Petrocom Energy Group, LLC

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**J. Chris Brewster**  
Cardtronics, Inc.

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**John D. Thomas**

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Evolution Petroleum Corp.

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Sirius Solutions  
**Gerry Trostle**  
Enerfin Resources Co.

### **FERF Liaison Chair**

**Bruce Misamore**

### **Member Career Svcs Chair**

**Eric A. Khan**  
Hydro-Chem

**See FEI Houston Directors,  
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## Nick Bednorz

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Nick is the Co-Founder and CEO of AXIA Resources, a Houston based financial advisory firm that was formed in 2004 by former Big 4 CPAs with a broad background of risk, compliance, SEC & financial reporting, internal audit, technical accounting and Sarbanes experience at companies such as Deloitte, Andersen, Shell Trading, CenterPoint Energy and Continental Airlines.

Throughout his experience, Nick has developed and implemented high level, comprehensive business risk and control assessments for several, large and mid-cap public companies. His strength lies in facilitating interactive working sessions with the senior leadership teams to communicate results and build consensus. Nick provides hands on risk consulting services to top energy companies in response to new and changing business conditions, including business restructuring, new business strategies and re-engineering outdated or poorly performing business processes.

### FEI Houston Chapter New Members

#### Edgar H. Case

Proactive, Hands-On Financial  
Problem Solver

#### Michael A. Denham

Quantum Energy Partners

#### Laura C. Fulton, CPA

AEI Services, LLP

## Career Services Corner

### Current Opportunities

- CFO, Distribution, Pre-IPO
- Controller, Oracle
- Director F&A Search Service

### Statistics & Outlook

- Members in Transition: 15
- Members Placed Since Last Meeting: 2
- Houston Unemployment Rate: 8.2%
- CFO level search activity is slow but showing signs of some recovery in Q1 2010 with energy, distressed situations, and private equity owners leading the recovery.

### Other News

- FERF Pros has offered free CPE to a member in transition for the rest of the year. Please contact career services if you have a need for free CPE.
- Members in transition breakfast coming in November. Date and location to be announced.

To discuss your individual career challenges confidentially, contact Eric Khan, Career Services Chair at (713) 252-3147 or [eric\\_a\\_khan@yahoo.com](mailto:eric_a_khan@yahoo.com) or Kevin Hanratty at (713) 520-6066 or [Kevin@astoundry.com](mailto:Kevin@astoundry.com).

## Robert Eckels

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He has received numerous awards and national recognition during his career. For his work in hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Esquire Magazine named him "Best & Brightest - Citizen of the Year of 2005" for his leadership. American City and County Magazine named Robert "County Leader of the Year 2006." The National Conflict Resolution Center awarded him its "National Peacemaker Award" and the American Leadership Forum its "Joseph Jaworski Award".

Robert served six terms in the state legislature before being elected county judge of Harris County. In 2007, Robert left the county to become a Partner in the international law firm of Fulbright & Jaworski, LLP concentrating on Homeland Security and Disaster Law, Public Finance and Public / Private Partnerships (US P3), Transportation and Infrastructure, Government Relations and Public Law.

He currently operates an independent legal practice concentrated on those same areas.

## FEI Houston Chapter Directors

### Mimi Alciatore

University of Houston

### Jerry Blurton

### Jeff Curtiss

KBR

### M. Colleen Estes

Sirius Solutions

### Thomas M. Imre

Enerfin Resources Co.

### Chris Matlock, CPA

Chris Matlock CPA

### James R. Storf

Sirius Solutions

### Michael J. Vitek

Igloo Products Corp.

### David Young

MPC Computers

## Calendar of Events

### November 10

#### Monthly Meeting

#### Robert A. Eckels

*How the Findings of the  
Governor's Commission on  
Disaster Recovery and Re-  
newal May Affect You and  
Your Business*

#### Prof. Development

#### Nick Bednorz

#### Axia Resources

*The New Untouchables:  
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the Recession*

### January 19

#### Monthly Meeting

#### Sudeep Kumar Singh, CIO

Minlam Asset Management

#### Prof. Development

Hein + Associates

### February 16

#### Monthly Meeting

#### Stephen R Grace

*Corporate Governance-  
Managing Risks and  
Litigations*

#### Prof. Development

Oracle

All meetings listed here will be held at Houston Country Club unless otherwise noted on our website [www.feihouston.org](http://www.feihouston.org).

## 2008-2009 Strategic Partners

### Platinum Sponsors

**Axia Resources**  
**Bowne of Houston**  
**Fulbright & Jaworski**  
**Hein + Associates**  
**KPMG**  
**Oracle**  
**Resources Global Professionals**  
**Sirius Solutions**

### Golf Sponsors

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### Gold Sponsors

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**Outsource Partners International Inc.**  
**UHY Advisors TX, LLC**  
**Wells Fargo Bank**

*Secure your FEI sponsorship today!*

## November 10 Meeting & P.D.

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1 Potomac Drive

P.D. Session (4:30pm):

**Nick Bednorz**  
**Axia Resources**

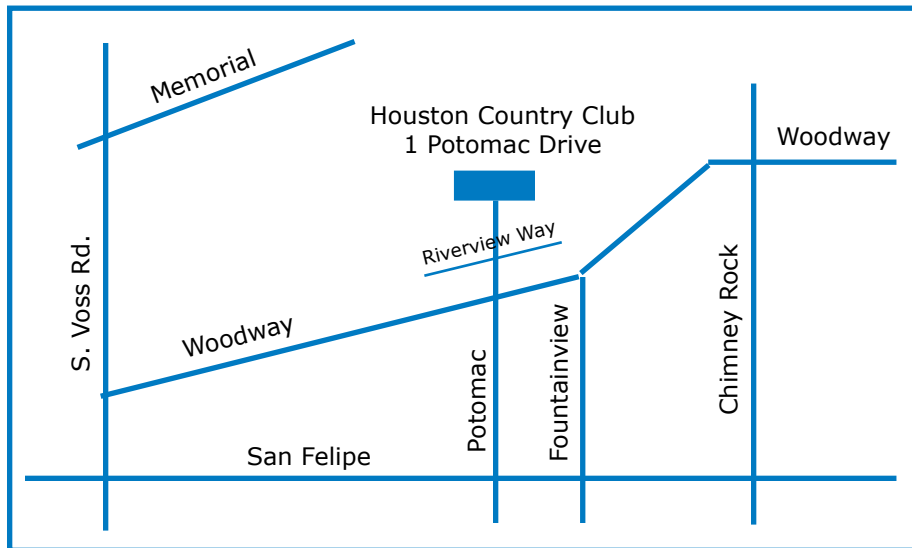
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**AXIA**  
RESOURCES

**BKD**  
CPAs & Advisors

## November 10 Fax/Mail Reservation Form

[Click Here to Register Online](#) or go to [www.feihouston.org](http://www.feihouston.org)

Mail to: P.O. Box 631206, Houston, TX 77263-1206 or Fax to: 713.776.1308  
One form per registrant please, photocopy as necessary.

**Reservations Required** by 3:00 pm 2 business days before the meeting.  
may be canceled without cost as late as noon the day before the meeting. "No-shows" will be billed \$90.

**Meeting Location:** *Houston Country Club* - 1 Potomac Drive

**Meeting Cost:** No charge for Chapter Members and 1st time prospective members.  
Guests -\$90/person (guests & prospective members must be accompanied by member)

Attendee Name

Organization

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Fax

E-Mail

Check One:  Chapter Member  1st time Prospective Member

Spouse (name): \_\_\_\_\_

Attending:  Professional Development & Dinner  Dinner Meeting Only

**Guests please indicate payment via:**  MasterCard  Visa  Amex

Card#: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Billing Address & Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_